

## Geography – Background Information – 2011 Census Coverage of the boundaries / Geographic extents

For 2011 Output Area boundaries there are 2 sets of coverage:

- Extent of the realm (EoR)  
The boundaries are to the Mean Low Water Mark.
- Clipped to the coastline with inland water removed Mean High Water Mark (MHW)  
The boundaries are created from EoR boundaries, and show the data to the MHW . We have then removed inland water as listed in the Standard Area Measurements (SAM) produced by the Office for National Statistics.

'Clipped to the coastline' boundaries closely represent map users' expectations of how a coastal boundary should look.

Local Characteristic and Detailed Characteristic Sectors are available at HWM only.

The base data is the frozen set of 2011 postcode boundaries aligned to Ordnance Survey (OS) BoundaryLine. Previously the geographies of Scotland had been 'built up' from the digitised postcode boundaries and as a result there were situations where a geography's boundaries e.g. council Area did not match exactly with the OS BoundaryLine product.

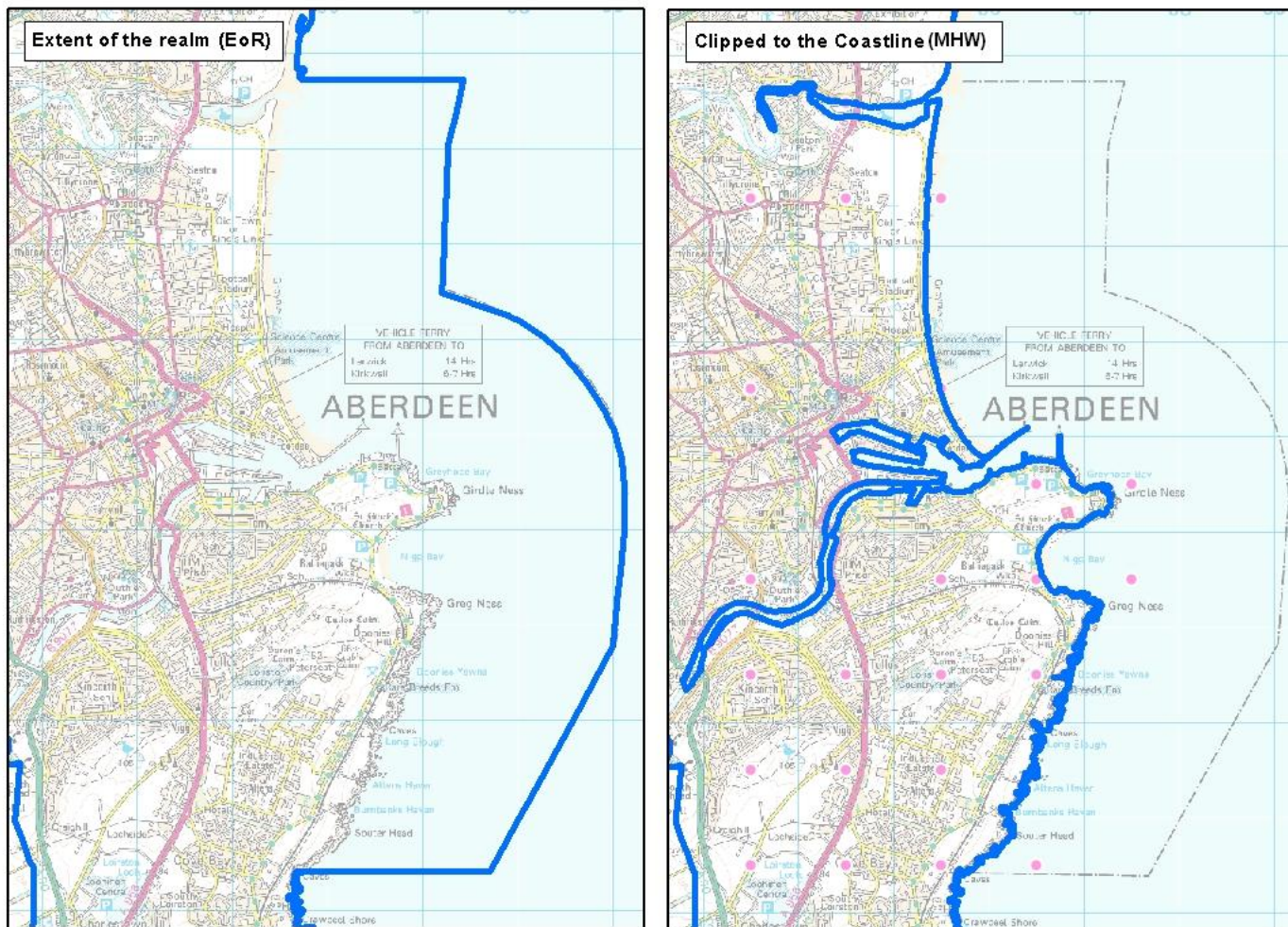
To ensure consistent alignment of the 2011 Census geographies with national statistics policy we re-aligned postcodes to council area boundaries consistent with those in OS BoundaryLine. This work extended the coastline out to be consistent with local authorities (generally the Mean Low Water Mark), filled in lochs as these are covered by local authorities and filled in any streams/estuaries which were not consistent with local authorities.

The Standard Area Measurements (SAM) were then used to identify inland water and the polygons extracted from OS MasterMap in order to create a clipped version of the data with inland water removed. We found a couple of discrepancies between the area measurements in SAM for lochs and the measurements for the same lochs derived from OS MasterMap which have been passed to Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Ordnance Survey (OS) for investigation.

More information on standard area measurements can be found in the geography [Policy](#) section of the National Records of Scotland website.

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**Example: the area around Aberdeen harbour is included in the Extent of the realm, compared with the coastline depicted by the Mean High Water Mark.**



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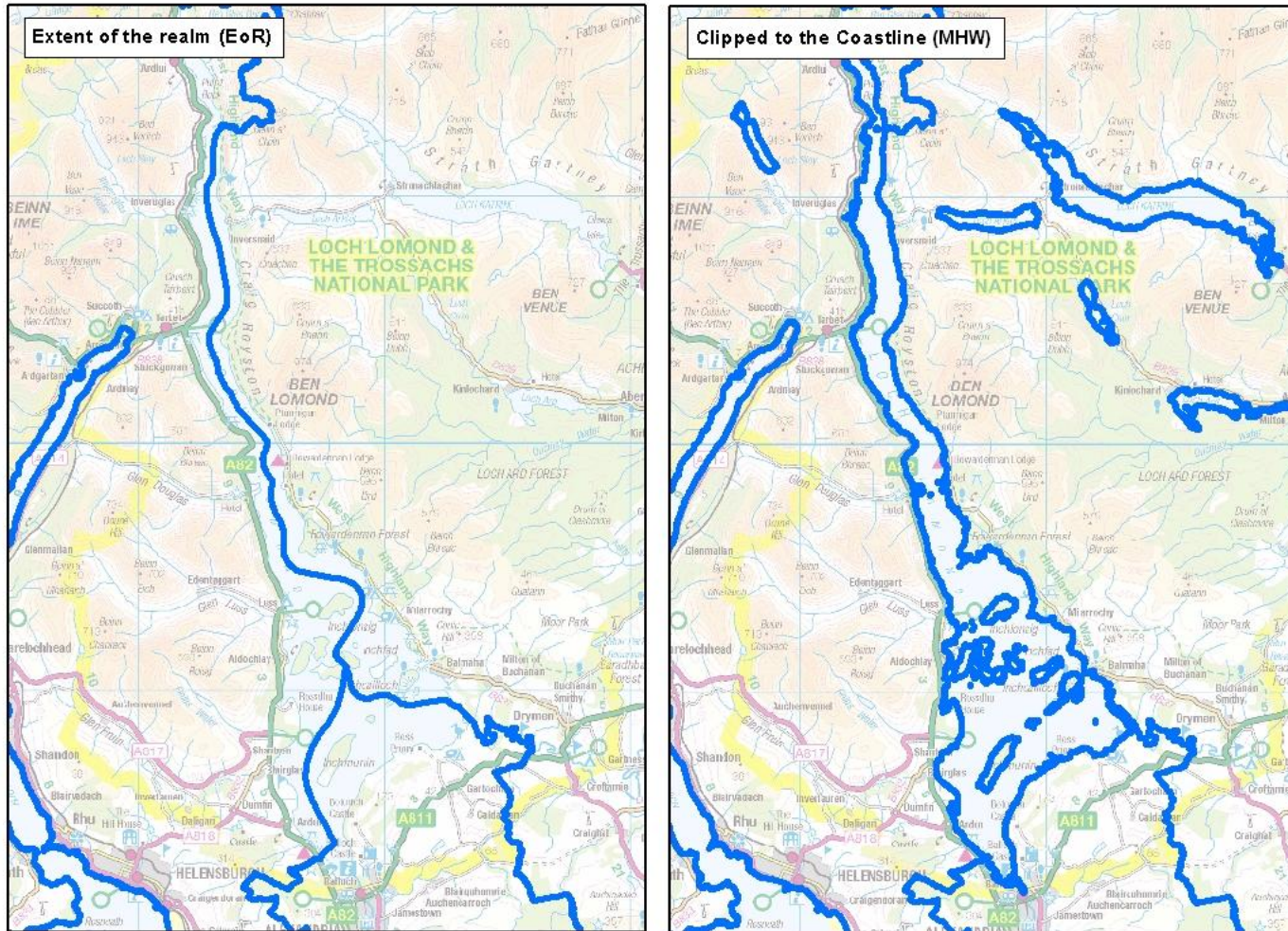
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**Example: the inland water of Loch Lomond is included in the Extent of the realm, compared with the inland water removed as depicted in the Mean High Water Mark.**



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